

# LOCAL & REGION

## Efforts conserve Lake Creek Valley

What is the Eagle Valley Land Trust up to in the Lake Creek Valley? Your local Land Trust believes the Lake Creek Valley should be saved forever! We remain focused on land conservation opportunities in and around Lake Creek. This beautiful and pristine slice of Rocky Mountain heritage is the last southern creek valley within our community that has not been developed with a golf course and endless subdivisions, and it deserves to stay that way.

The creeks, streams, aspens, pines, ranches and meadows of the Lake Creek Valley are worth conserving in their current, natural state. Neighbored by U.S. National Forest and wilderness, the Lake Creek Valley is home to the third largest elk herd in Colorado, along

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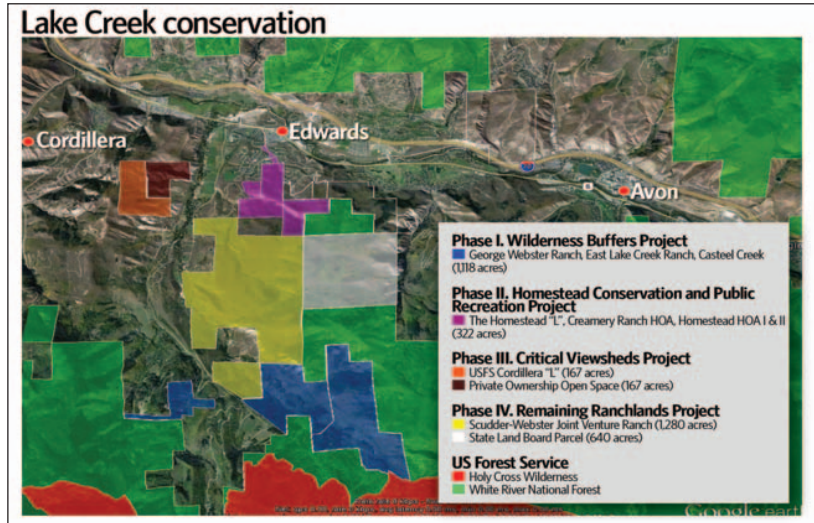


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with black bears, mule deer, foxes, beavers, eagles and dozens of other animals. With public trail systems throughout the area, Lake Creek is also a place for people. The outdoor recreation and wilderness opportunities available here add many more reasons to protect and conserve Lake Creek from suburban development.

The Lake Creek Valley has it all — Western ranching heritage, iconic Colorado landscapes and views, public hiking trails, aspen groves, pine forests, clean waters full of fish, huge elk herds, front door access points into the White River National Forest and Holy Cross Wilderness ... and no golf courses! The Lake Creek Valley is a picture postcard for what it means to be in Colorado.

So where are we on protecting land and water in this beautiful valley? What has been done and what remains to be done? The Eagle Valley Land Trust has been working on a “We Like Lake



Creek!” conservation campaign for many years. The first phases of conservation in Lake Creek were completed in the late 1990s and early 2000s. These projects permanently protected more than 1,000 acres of historic ranches, fresh waters and elk winter ranges in the southern part of the Lake Creek Valley. The second phases of conservation in Lake Creek were completed in June with the successful Homestead Conservation and Public Recreation Project. Four new conservation easements and more than 320 new acres of land were conserved forever, ensuring that we have public hiking trails in the area while adding more protections for the land, water and elk herds.

Today, the Eagle Valley Land Trust and our partners are actively working on the third phases of conservation in the region. If successful, these efforts will provide for the permanent protection of several important alpine landscapes and mountain view-sheds on the ridgelines high above the Lake Creek Valley. Breathtaking views help to make Lake Creek special, and we are working to save these critical landscapes forever. The third phases of conservation in Lake Creek will save more than 330 acres and should be completed in early 2013.

The fourth phases of conservation are focused on the remaining ranch

lands and the large land parcels in the heart of the Lake Creek Valley. Your local Land Trust is hard at work, and at the negotiating table with local landowners, to save these lands in their current, natural state for generations to come. This includes the 640-acre State Land Board parcel that is contiguous with National Forest land and the 1,280-acre Scudder-Webster Joint Venture Ranch. These vast and environmentally rich ranch lands contain some of the most significant and important conservation values within Lake Creek, and we will continue to push for their permanent protection as part of our campaign.

The people of Eagle County benefit from having a strong, active and engaged local Land Trust with a plan for preserving the character of our community, one acre at a time. The Eagle Valley Land Trust is proud to serve as your local conservation representative in efforts such as the one underway in Lake Creek. I hope you will join us as we conserve land and water in the Lake Creek Valley. We like Lake Creek!

Jason Denhart is the director of communications and development at the Eagle Valley Land Trust. For more information about the “We Like Lake Creek!” conservation effort, contact him at 970-748-7654 or [jdenhart@evlt.org](mailto:jdenhart@evlt.org).